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| Some background for this lesson: I’ve asked the students to pick up the Metro newspaper so that they can keep up with current events in English. Most of them already do, but they do so in their native language. We have a brief review of the day’s headlines at the beginning of every class. In the context of discussing the news, I have introduced the simple past tense even though it’s not part of the curriculum for their level because it’s impossible to discuss anything in a meaningful way without at least attempting to use the past tense. The most important news item in the Boston area for the past few days has been the death of Mayor Menino. Actually, I learned about it from the students because I hadn’t followed the news on Thursday. This lesson about the career and death of Mayor Menino was requested by the students, and it’s going to take about one hour. (We will also touch upon today’s elections.) |
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| Content Objectives. Students will be able to read and comprehend a simplified newspaper story about the life and death of a famous person.They will learn and/or review the job titles and duties of city and state leaders, and learn the names of the current office holders. They will be able to talk about the life and work of such a person in simple terms. “He was the mayor of Boston for 20 years. He was a good mayor because he was honest and hard-working.”Grammar objectives: Learn and/or review the past tense of the verb to be. Review questions with wh-words, for example: Who was Thomas Menino? What was his job? What does a mayor do? How long did he have that job? When did he start? What was his party? How long is the term of a mayor? Where was he born? How old was he when he died? Who is the mayor of Boston now? Who is the governor of Massachusetts now? What did Mr. Walsh say about Menino? What did Mr. Patrick say about him? How did the people of Boston feel about Mayor Menino? Who wants to be the next governor of Massachusetts?  |
| Frameworks: S1.2cS2.2c, S2.2b, L2.2a, R1.2a,  L2.2f, L3.2eR3.2a, R3.2dR2.2d  |
| Activities: 1. I ask the students about today’s biggest news story, and hope they will say “The funeral of Mayor Menino.” I will bring in today’s Globe and Metro. We look at the front page of the Globe together. The headline is “Final Salutes.” We try to puzzle out together what it means. 2. I show the sts pictures of Menino, Walsh and Patrick, and ask them if they know who they are. We go over their job titles and duties of mayor and governor (in simple terms). 3.Other vocabulary to be reviewed or learned: leader, funeral, government, elect, election, funeral, eulogy, condolences, widow, mourners, to pay one’s respects. 4. I give out a simplified news story, which summarizes the career of Mayor Menino, and gives a brief description of the funeral and the reactions of Bostonians to his death. 5. We read it silently, then I read it aloud, and then I ask a couple of different volunteers to read it. I correct pronunciation mistakes. We discuss, I ask comprehension questions. 6. I hand out written comprehension questions about the story. I ask students to work in pairs. I go around and check. We check the answers together.7. I’ve cut the article into story strips. I ask them to put the original story away and continue to work with their partner to reconstruct the story. I go around and check. 8. I ask a couple of volunteers to summarize the story in their own words. 9. Homework: I ask them if there is/was a similarly liked and respected civic leader in their country, and to write a short paragraph about him/her.  |
| Materials: The Globe, The Metro, pictures of Menino, Walsh and Patrick. Simplified news story (by me), worksheet with comprehension questions, story strips.  |
| Assessment: The answers to the comprehension questions, and the telling of the story in their own words.  |

Wrap-up and reflection: It’s important for the students to be aware of current events of their new country, state and city. As I said, many of them already follow international, national and even local news in their own language on the Internet and on TV and radio; however, when students practice reading about and discussing current events, they prepare to be more active participants in U.S. society. (Some of them will eventually apply for U.S. citizenship, and questions about national and local government will be asked in their interview.)